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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 006030

SIPDIS

"H" PLEASE PASS TO CONGRESSMAN HASTINGS' OFFICE

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [OREP](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PINS](#) [PROP](#) [PTER](#) [AMGT](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: CODEL HASTINGS MEETS IN TURKEY IN FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT AS OSCEPA PRESIDENT

REF: A. STATE 204727

[B](#). STATE 205571

[C](#). ANKARA 5467

Classified By: .

Classified by DCM Robert Deutsch under E.O. 12958, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) 1. Summary. Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Fla), in his first official visit as president of the OSCEPA, conducted a visit October 2-4, 2004, to Istanbul and Ankara, Turkey. Hastings met with Prime Minister Erdogan, Foreign Minister Gul, Minister of National Defense Gonul, Parliament Speaker Arinc, Deputy Parliament Speaker Alptekin, TGNA Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Dulger and the TGNA delegation to the OSCEPA. Hastings proposed reforming and strengthening the OSCE while Turkish interlocutors used the meetings as an opportunity to 1) highlight Turkey's positive efforts to achieve EU membership; 2) solicit U.S. support for Turkey's position regarding regional terrorism issues; and 3) expand opportunities for the OIC in global fora. End summary.

Hastings' Message

(U) 2. Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-Fla), as the current president of the Organization for Security and Cooperation Parliamentary Assembly (OSCEPA) used his meetings to propose internal reforms to strengthen the OSCE. Hastings said that among reform proposals, the most important is strengthening the secretary general.⁸

Prime Minister Erdogan

(U) 3. Turkish PM Erdogan expressed support for Hastings' proposals and enhanced international dialogue among regional parliamentary groups. Erdogan claimed:
-- particularly in respect to Iraq, international cooperation is the tool for promoting and protecting peace and security;
-- propaganda was the ultimate goal of terrorism, and that terrorists in Iraq have achieved that goal;
-- on EU accession, Turkey has reached a final point with the EU;
-- his ruling AK party held human rights as a priority.

FM Gul

(U) 4. FonMin Gul 1) asserted that the OSCE can serve as a platform to advance inter-parliamentary relations with partners⁸ NATO, the EU, and the UN; (2) suggested that the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Black Sea Economic Cooperative (BSEC) should also be included in international dialogues; and 3) agreed with the need for fundamental reforms to the OSCE parliamentary process.

(U) 5. Gul noted that U.S.-Turkey relations are far-reaching and tested,⁸ based on more than just military cooperation. Gul pleaded with Hastings to "Please defend us in Congress; we understand it, it's a pluralistic country, but we need your help."⁸ Regarding Turkey's position on Darfur, he said, "It's not only your problem, it's our problem, too."

MEETING WITH MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE GONUL

(C) 6. Minister of National Defense Vecdi Gonul discussed the importance of our bilateral relations, Turkey's military procurement practices, the role of Turkey's military in protecting the country's borders and the structure of Turkish intelligence services. Gonul emphasized that EU membership would not result in Turkey's neglect of its NATO membership. Gonul viewed casualty figures in terrorist attacks as evidence that, in part as a result of Turkish intelligence-gathering techniques, the terrorist organizations were unable to get the greater populace on their side. An aide to Gonul noted that the current situation in Iraq concerned Turkey and he expressed Turkey's gratitude at U.S. placement of the PKK on its list of terrorist organizations.

Parliament Speaker Arinc

(U) 7. Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) Speaker Bulent Arinc said Turkey wanted to improve its relationship with the U.S. while also joining the EU, and reviewed Parliament's accomplishments in passing EU-related reform measures. Hastings encouraged Arinc to have Parliament address terrorism financing issues and offered to provide a summary of U.S. terrorism finance legislation.

Acting Parliament Speaker Alptekin

(U) 8. Hastings also met with Deputy TGNA Speaker Ismail Alptekin, and, as with Arinc, again urged Turkey to send monitors to the U.S. presidential elections.

TGNA Foreign Affairs Committee

(U) 9. TGNA Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Mehmet Dulger reiterated Gul's comments, noting that 1) enhanced dialogue between OSCE and other regional parliamentary groups is essential and 2) structural reform within the OSCE is absolutely necessary. Dulger said that Turkey's long-suffering battle against terrorism (PKK) qualifies the GOT as a good resource for advice against terror.⁸ He advised that once the U.S. takes action against the PKK, you will find a Turkey that will be willing to help the U.S. on all fronts.⁸

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OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Turkish Delegation

(U) 10. Congressman Hastings met with members of the TGNA delegation to the OSCEPA, including both ruling AK Party and opposition Republican Peoples Party (CHP) MPs. Host (and AK MP and OSCEPA Vice-President) Nevzat Yalcintas asserted the compatibility of Islam and democracy. CHP MP Gaye Erbatur emphasized the secular nature of the Turkish state, the need to develop better relations with the EU, and the need to expand the OSCE's role in the region. AK MP Alaattin Buyukkaya urged Hastings to find ways to widen other nations' OSCE participation and contributions.

(C) 11. Comment: Each meeting appeared to be stage-managed by the GOT to deliver a consistent AK Party message regarding Turkey's campaign to join the EU, strong U.S.-Turkish bilateral relations and the fight against terrorism. Higher level GOT representatives seemed to interpret OSCE "reform" as an invitation to include the OIC and the BSEC, organizations where Turkey believes it has influence, in EU organization meetings as well.

(U) 12. Congressman Hastings did not have an opportunity to clear this message.

EDELMAN